

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

CASE NO.:

DOUG LONGHINI,

Plaintiff,

v.

RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and
ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP. D/B/A
CHEVRON,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, individually and on behalf of all other similarly situated mobility-impaired individuals (hereinafter “Plaintiff”), sues RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP. D/B/A CHEVRON, (hereinafter “Defendants”), and as grounds alleges:

JURISDICTION, PARTIES, AND VENUE

1. This is an action for injunctive relief, a declaration of rights, attorneys' fees, litigation expenses, and costs pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12181, et seq., (the “Americans with Disabilities Act” or “ADA”) and 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202.

2. The Court has original jurisdiction over Plaintiff's claims arising under 42 U.S.C. § 12181, et seq. pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1343 and 42 U.S.C. § 12117(a).

3. The Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202, and may render declaratory judgment on the existence or nonexistence of any right under 42 U.S.C. § 12181, et seq.

4. Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, is an individual over eighteen years of age, with a

residence in Miami-Dade County, Florida, and is otherwise *sui juris*.

5. At all times material, Defendant, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, owned and operated a commercial gas station at 5100 NW 7th Street Miami, Florida 33128 (hereinafter the “Commercial Property”) and conducted a substantial amount of business in that place of public accommodation in Miami Dade County, Florida.

6. At all times material, Defendant, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, was and is a Florida Limited Liability Company, organized under the laws of Florida with its principal place of business in Miami, Florida.

7. At all times material, Defendant, ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., owned and operated a commercial gas station at 5100 NW 7th Street Miami, Florida 33128 (hereinafter the “Commercial Property”) and conducted a substantial amount of business in that place of public accommodation in Miami Dade County, Florida.

8. At all times material, Defendant, ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., was and is a Florida Corporation, organized under the laws of Florida with its principal place of business in Miami, Florida. Defendant, ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., holds itself out to the public as “Chevron.”

9. Venue is properly located in the Southern District of Florida because Defendants’ Commercial Property is located in Miami-Dade County, Florida, Defendants regularly conduct business within Miami Dade County, Florida, and because a substantial part(s) of the events or omissions giving rise to these claims occurred in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

10. Although over thirty (30) years have passed since the effective date of Title III of the ADA, Defendants have yet to make their facility accessible to individuals with disabilities.

11. Congress provided commercial businesses one and a half years to implement the Act. The effective date was January 26, 1992. In spite of this abundant lead-time and the extensive publicity the ADA has received since 1990, Defendants have continued to discriminate against people who are disabled in ways that block them from access and use of Defendants' property and the business therein.

12. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in 28 CFR 36.201 and requires landlords and tenants to be liable for compliance

13. Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, is an individual with disabilities as defined by and pursuant to the ADA. DOUG LONGHINI uses a wheelchair to ambulate. DOUG LONGHINI has very limited use of his hands and cannot operate any mechanisms which require tight grasping or twisting of the wrist. He also has a great deal of trouble walking or otherwise ambulating without the use of a wheelchair. He is limited in his major life activities by such, including but not limited to walking, standing, grabbing, grasping and/or pinching.

14. Defendant, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, owns, operates and/or oversees the Commercial Property, its general parking lot and parking spots specific to the business therein.

15. Defendant, ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., owns, operates and/or oversees their respective business within the Commercial Property, located in Miami, Florida that is the subject of this Action.

16. The subject Commercial Property is open to the public and is located in Miami, Florida. The individual Plaintiff visits the Commercial Property, to include a visit to the Commercial Property and business located within the Commercial Property on or about August 17, 2022 and encountered multiple violations of the ADA that directly affected his ability to use and enjoy the Commercial Property. He often visits the Commercial Property and business located

within the Commercial Property in order to avail himself of the goods and services offered there, and because it is approximately fourteen (14) miles from his residence, and is near his friends' residences as well as other businesses and restaurants he frequents as a patron. He plans to return to the Commercial Property within two (2) months from the date of the filing of this Complaint.

17. The Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, found the Commercial Property to be rife with ADA violations. The Plaintiff encountered architectural barriers at the Commercial Property and business located within the Commercial Property and wishes to continue his patronage and use of each of the premises.

18. The Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, has encountered architectural barriers that are in violation of the ADA at the subject Commercial Property. The barriers to access at Defendants' Commercial Property have each denied or diminished Plaintiff's ability to visit the Commercial Property and have endangered his safety in violation of the ADA. The barriers to access, which are set forth below, have likewise posed a risk of injury(ies), embarrassment, and discomfort to Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, and others similarly situated.

19. Defendants, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., own and operate a place of public accommodation as defined by the ADA and the regulations implementing the ADA, 28 CFR 36.201 (a) and 36.104. Defendants, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., are responsible for complying with the obligations of the ADA. The place of public accommodation that Defendants, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., own and operate is the Commercial Property Business located at 5100 NW 7th Street Miami, Florida 33128.

20. Defendant, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, as landlord and owner of the Commercial Property, is responsible for all ADA violations listed in this Complaint.

21. Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, has a realistic, credible, existing and continuing threat of discrimination from the Defendants' non-compliance with the ADA with respect to the described Commercial Property, including but not necessarily limited to the allegations of this Complaint. Plaintiff has reasonable grounds to believe that he will continue to be subjected to discrimination at the Commercial Property, in violation of the ADA. Plaintiff desires to visit the Commercial Property and business located therein, not only to avail himself of the goods and services available at the Commercial Property, but to assure himself that the Commercial Property is in compliance with the ADA, so that he and others similarly situated will have full and equal enjoyment of the Commercial Property and the business therein, without fear of discrimination.

22. Defendants have discriminated against the individual Plaintiff by denying him access to, and full and equal enjoyment of, the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and/or accommodations of the Commercial Property, as prohibited by 42 U.S.C. § 12182 et seq.

ADA VIOLATIONS

23. The Plaintiff adopts and re-alleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 22 above as though fully set forth herein.

24. Defendants, RUBY INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC and ALIBELLA FUEL SERVICE CORP., have discriminated, and continue to discriminate, against Plaintiff in violation of the ADA by failing, inter alia, to have accessible facilities by January 26, 1992 (or January 26, 1993, if Defendants have 10 or fewer employees and gross receipts of \$500,000 or less). A list of the violations that Plaintiff encountered during his visit to the Commercial Property, include but are not limited to, the following:

A. Parking

i. The Plaintiff had difficulty exiting the vehicle, as designated accessible parking spaces are

located on an excessive slope. Violation: There are accessible parking spaces located on an excessive slope violating Section 4.6.3 of the ADAAG and Section 502.4 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.

- ii. The Plaintiff had difficulty exiting the vehicle, as designated accessible parking space access aisles are located on an excessive slope. Violation: There are accessible parking space access aisles located on an excessive slope violating Section 4.6.3 of the ADAAG and Section 502.4 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.

B. Entrance Access and Path of Travel

- i. The Plaintiff could not traverse through areas of the store, as the required 36" path is not provided. Violation: A continuous path of travel connecting all essential elements of the store is not provided, violating Sections 4.2.1, & 4.3.3 of the ADAAG and Sections 206.2.2 & 403.5.1 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.

C. Public Restrooms

- i. The Plaintiff could not enter the restroom without assistance, as the required maneuvering clearance is not provided. Violation: The restroom door does not provide the required latch side clearance violating Section 4.13.6 of the ADAAG and Section 404.2.4 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.
- ii. The Plaintiff had difficulty using the doorknob and the locking mechanism on the restroom door without assistance, as they require tight grasping. Violation: The restroom door has non-compliant hardware for disabled patrons, violating Sections 4.13.9 & 4.27.4 of the ADAAG and Sections 309.4 & 404.2.7 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.

- iii. The Plaintiff could not use the lavatory without assistance, as the required knee clearance is not provided. Violation: There are lavatories in public restrooms without the required clearances provided, violating the requirements in Section 4.19.2 and Figure 31 of the ADAAG and Sections 306 and 606.2 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.
- iv. The Plaintiff could not use the coat hook without assistance, as it is mounted too high. Violation: There are coat hooks provided for public use in the restroom, outside the reach ranges prescribed in Sections 4.2.5, 4.2.6, and 4.25.3 of the ADAAG and Sections 308 and 604.8.3 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.
- v. The Plaintiff could not transfer to the toilet without assistance, as the rear grab bar is missing, and the side grab bar is not mounted at the required location. Violation: The grab bars do not comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 4.16.4 & Figure 29 of the ADAAG and Section 604.5 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.
- vi. The Plaintiff could not use the soap dispenser without assistance, as it is mounted too high. Violation: There are dispensers provided for public use in the restroom, with controls outside the ranges prescribed in Sections 4.2.5, 4.2.6, and 4.27.3 of the ADAAG and Sections 308 & 309.3 of the 2010 ADA Standards, whose resolution is readily achievable.

RELIEF SOUGHT AND THE BASIS

25. The discriminatory violations described in this Complaint are not an exclusive list of the Defendants' ADA violations. Plaintiff requests an inspection of the Defendants places of public accommodation in order to photograph and measure all of the discriminatory act's violating the ADA and barriers to access in conjunction with Rule 34 and timely notice. Plaintiff further requests to inspect any and all barriers to access that were concealed by virtue of the barriers'

presence, which prevented Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, from further ingress, use, and equal enjoyment of the Commercial; Plaintiff requests to be physically present at such inspection in conjunction with Rule 34 and timely notice. A Plaintiff requests the inspection in order to participate in crafting a remediation plan to address Plaintiff's request for injunctive relief. The remediations for the ADA violations listed herein are readily achievable.

26. The Plaintiff, and all other individuals similarly situated, have been denied access to, and have been denied full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities privileges, benefits, programs and activities offered by Defendants' Commercial Property and the business within the Commercial Property; and has otherwise been discriminated against and damaged by the Defendants because of the Defendants' ADA violations as set forth above. The Plaintiff, and all others similarly situated, will continue to suffer such discrimination, injury and damage without the immediate relief provided by the ADA as requested herein. In order to remedy this discriminatory situation, the Plaintiff requires an inspection of the Defendants' place of public accommodation in order to determine all of the areas of non-compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Plaintiff further requests a remediation plan and the opportunity to participate in the crafting of the remediation plan in order to participate in crafting a remediation plan to address Plaintiff's request for injunctive relief.

27. Defendants have discriminated against the Plaintiff by denying him access to full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and/or accommodations of their places of public accommodation or commercial facility, in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 12181 et seq. and 28 CFR 36.302 et seq. Defendants have also discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 12131 et seq. and 28 C.F.R. Part 35 et seq for excluding Plaintiff by reason of disability from participation in and denying him benefits of the services,

programs, or activities of a public entity. Furthermore, the Defendants continue to discriminate against Plaintiff, and all those similarly situated, by failing to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford all offered goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations to individuals with disabilities; and by failing to take such efforts that may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services.

28. Plaintiff is without adequate remedy at law, will suffer irreparable harm, and has a clear legal right to the relief sought. Further, injunctive relief will serve the public interest and all those similarly situated to Plaintiff. Plaintiff has retained the undersigned counsel and is entitled to recover attorneys' fees, costs and litigation expenses from Defendants pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12205 and 28 CFR 36.505.

29. Defendants are required to remove the existing architectural barriers to the physically disabled when such removal is readily achievable for their place of public similarly situated, will continue to suffer such discrimination, injury and damage without the immediate relief provided by the ADA as requested herein. In order to remedy this discriminatory situation, the Plaintiff requires an inspection of the Defendants' place of public accommodation in order to determine all of the areas of non-compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

30. Notice to Defendants is not required as a result of the Defendants' failure to cure the violations by January 26, 1992 (or January 26, 1993, if Defendants have 10 or fewer employees and gross receipts of \$500,000 or less). All other conditions precedent have been met by the Plaintiff or waived by the Defendants.

31. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12188, this Court is provided with authority to grant

Plaintiff's Injunctive Relief, including an order to alter the property where Defendants operate their business, located within the Commercial Property located in Miami, Florida, the interiors, exterior areas, and the common exterior areas of the Commercial Property to make those facilities readily accessible and useable to the Plaintiff and all other mobility-impaired persons; or by closing the facility until such time as the Defendants cure its violations of the ADA.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, DOUG LONGHINI, respectfully requests that this Honorable Court issue (i) a Declaratory Judgment determining Defendants, at the commencement of the subject lawsuit, were and are in violation of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12181 et seq. and Title II the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12131; (ii) Injunctive relief against Defendants, including an order to make all readily achievable alterations to the facilities; or to make such facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities to the extent required by the ADA; and to require Defendants to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford all offered goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations to individuals with disabilities; and by failing to take such steps that may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services; (iii) An award of attorneys' fees, costs and litigation expenses pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12205; and (iv) such other relief as the Court deems just and proper, and/or is allowable under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Dated: October 5, 2022

GARCIA-MENOCAL & PEREZ, P.L.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
4937 S.W. 74th Court
Miami, Florida 33155
Telephone: (305) 553-3464
Facsimile: (305) 553-3031

Primary E-Mail: ajperez@lawgmp.com
Secondary E-Mails: bvirues@lawgmp.com;
dperaza@lawgmp.com

By: /s/ *Anthony J. Perez*

ANTHONY J. PEREZ

Florida Bar No.: 535451

BEVERLY VIRUES

Florida Bar No.: 123713